
This position may be filled as a multi-grade career ladder. Attached responsibilities are for the full performance level as described below. At developmental grade levels, assignments will be of more limited scope, performed with less independence, and may reflect limited complexity and personal contacts. At developmental levels, incumbent will be acquiring background necessary to function at the full performance level.

Major Duties

This is a developmental position. As a trainee investigator, the incumbent frequently participates with higher level personnel in the planning and conducting of investigations of alleged violations of Federal laws and regulations governing the movement of plant materials and livestock; the welfare and treatment of animals; the manufacture and distribution of veterinary biological products; the importation and interstate shipment of organisms and vectors; the distribution of genetically engineered agricultural organisms, and the standards established for accredited veterinarians.

May participate in the investigation of felonies under Title 18 United States Code such as fraudulent claims and false statements on certificates. Works cooperatively with investigators of the Office of Inspector General and other investigative agencies. Participates in investigations of violations of state laws as deemed appropriate by the Assistant Regional Director.

In conducting investigations, the Investigator (1) contacts and interviews various individuals from who information can be collected; (2) traces shipments from source to destination by checking records of carriers, intermediate handlers, exhibitors, research facilities, and dealers; (3) analyzes, interprets, and evaluates information obtained; (4) verifies and corroborates information including the administering of oaths and preparation of affidavits; (5) drafts investigation reports recommending final action; (6) assists the U.S. Attorney or OGC attorneys by securing additional information or evidence for use in preparation of cases of alleged violations; (7) assists in preparing witness lists and subpoenas (in some instances, may deliver subpoenas); and (8) appears as a witness before grand juries and in local, State, and Federal courts.

1. Knowledge Required by the Position

Knowledge of investigative techniques, rules of evidence, rules of criminal procedures, and precedent court decisions concerning admissibility of evidence, constitutional rights, search and seizure, and related issues.

Skill in the use of interviewing techniques to obtain factual information related to the commission of a violation.

Skill in developing and presenting evidence that reconstructs events, sequences, and time elements, and that establishes relationships, responsibilities, legal liabilities and conflicts of interest in a manner that provides a sound basis for prosecution.

Skill in using a camera to document appropriate aspects of investigations.

Basic computer skills for retrieving information from computer databases.
Knowledge of the Code of Federal Regulations as related to animal and plant quarantine; animal welfare; horse protection; import/export of animals, animal products, plants, plant pests, organisms, and vectors; and the manufacture and distribution of veterinary biological products.

Knowledge of the Title 18 U.S. Code, Crimes and Criminal Procedure.

Knowledge of State-Federal cooperative disease control and eradication programs.

2. **Supervisory Controls**

The incumbent works under the general supervision and direction of the Assistant Regional Director. A Senior Investigator and/or Assigned Mentor works directly with the incumbent and provides more detailed technical guidance and training. As expertise is developed, however, the incumbent performs specific investigative tasks independently. Work is reviewed in progress and upon completion by the Senior Investigator and/or Assigned Mentor.

3. **Guidelines**

Guidelines consist of an extensive body of Federal and State laws and regulations which are complex in their application. The investigator must use knowledge of this body of regulations and, with the assistance of a higher graded investigator, make interpretations based on the evidence developed. Guidelines are also available in the form of memoranda which outline general Agency policy with regard to the handling of violation cases.

4. **Complexity**

The work involves a variety of complex laws and regulations, both in investigating violations and preventing future violations. Each case is different, depending on the nature of the violation and the degree of cooperation received. New and different approaches to each case are necessary because of the variety of people and cases involved.

5. **Scope and Effect**

The major purpose of the work is to enforce the laws and regulations enacted to prevent the spread of diseases of livestock and plants and the inhumane treatment of animals. Enforcement is essential to protect the gains made by the investment of millions of dollars in State and Federal funds in disease eradication, to eliminate the practice of stealing animals for sale to research institutions, and to ensure adherence to the public mandate with regard to the treatment of animals.

6. **Personal Contacts**

Contacts include officials of the USDA and other Federal agencies, State and local officials, State and Federal law enforcement agencies, veterinary biological producers, State agriculture organizations, the general public, regulated industry representatives, practicing veterinarians, humane organizations, kennel clubs, and horse associations, and other Investigative and Enforcement Services Investigators.

7. **Purpose of Contacts**

Contacts are to interview persons having knowledge of an alleged violation; obtain records for evidence; coordinate with other law enforcement agencies; advise other APHIS employees, cooperators, and others of requirements of the regulations; make recommendations to supervisors; and to testify in legal proceedings. Investigators often encounter individuals or groups manifesting various degrees of hostility toward regulatory programs and/or personnel.

8. **Physical Demands**

Work involves considerable walking and standing and, at times, physical work with large animals. Duties usually involve frequent long distance travel by aircraft, automobile, or other conveyances.

9. **Work Environment**

Some of the work is performed in offices or laboratories. However, often investigations involve activity in livestock markets or stockyards, slaughtering plants, livestock feedlots, kennels, seaports, airports, and in other locations where there is exposure to the elements and danger of injury from animals. Investigators are also subject to the hazards of long distance travel by aircraft, automobile, or other conveyances for extended periods of time (e.g. Quick Response Teams, Task Forces etc.).

Other Conditions

Must be able to obtain and maintain a High Risk security clearance with an adjusted designation of Noncritical-Sensitive (NCS) because of access to Secret and/or Confidential Classified information, along with a Background Investigation (BI) based on unique factors involving special investigative duties.

The incumbent will be expected to travel up to 50 percent of the work schedule and may involve little or no advanced notice.